



Maricopa County

News Release

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July 2, 2003

MARICOPA COUNTY'S NEW PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM EMPOWERS WOMEN FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW

(Phoenix) – The Maricopa County Department of Public Health is launching a new program to address issues of proper nutrition, healthy weight, physical activity, stress management, and tobacco use in women aged 18-44.

Women Together for Health is a free 12-week program that primarily targets minority populations and those with low income or limited education. The program is available to worksites, schools, churches, community and neighborhood groups. Classes are available in Spanish.

“The goal of the program is empowering women to embrace healthy lifestyles for themselves and their families. Expected outcomes are reduced stress, improvement in dietary quality, increased physical activity, healthier weight, and smoking cessation,” said David Dube, Director of Maternal, Child & Family Health of the Maricopa County Department of Public Health.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, physical inactivity and unhealthy eating are the underlying causes responsible for at least 300,000 preventable deaths each year. In 2000, the cost of obesity alone in the United States was more than \$117 billion.

Research shows that women with limited education and financial support are more likely to smoke cigarettes, be physically inactive, and eat poorly. In addition, women employed outside the home generally experience increased stress levels due to their demanding roles as wife, mother, and caregiver.

“It’s clear that worksites would benefit from healthier employees and their families. On average, approximately 25% of the work force is affected by chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, or obesity. Fifty percent don’t get adequate exercise, 44% suffer from excessive levels of stress, and 26% smoke,” said Dr. Weisbuch.

To become a host site or to enroll in the *Women Together for Health Program*, contact the Maricopa County Department of Public Health at (602) 506-6850 for more information. This program is made possible through a grant from the Office of Women & Children’s Health, Arizona Department of Health Services

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